



## Institute 2-2 Ballyclare Comrades

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – NIFL Championship

### Ballyclare Comrades team (4-2-3-1)

1. Paddy Flood
2. Curtis Woods
5. Jason Johnston
23. Dean Youle
3. Adam Gray 🟡 (63')
6. Samuel McIlveen 🟡 (67')
8. JB Dobbin
7. Michael O'Hanlon
10. Corey McMullan 🟤 (19')
11. Denver Taggart 🟤 (36') 🟢 (73')
9. Chris Trussell

### Substitutes:

14. Gary Brown 🟢 (73')
15. Mark Shannon
16. Joel Haggan
17. Michael Haskins
24. Owen Thompson

**Institute:** Gallagher, R Morrow, Roddy, O'Donnell, McDermott, Foy, McIntyre, Grace, S Morrow, McCrudden, Curran. Subs: Brown, Pomeroy, Scoltock, Devlin, Muldoon.

Comrades had to be content with a point from their trip to promotion rivals Institute, having seen their opponents come back from two goals down. However there was much to encourage the travelling supporters from their team's display.

In charge for the final time, before stepping down from the manager's post, Stephen Hughes made one change to his starting line-up. Striker Chris Trussell was available again and came into the team to replace Kevin Lynch, who missed the game due to work commitments.

The visitors started in lively fashion, attacking well down the flanks, with Adam Gray and Denver Taggart particularly dangerous on the left.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> minute Gray produced a typically surging run, after intercepting the ball on the halfway line, and saw his shot from 25 yards fly a couple of feet over the bar.

Comrades continued to dominate and in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute they had a clear opportunity, when a ball played high across the box by JB Dobbin found Michael O'Hanlon at the back post. He then deftly laid it back to Chris Trussell, in a good position 7 yards out, but, leaning back, he fired his shot over the bar.

Two minutes later however Comrades excellent pressing paid off to give them a deserved lead. Chris Trussell chased down a rather nervous back-pass to home 'keeper Gallagher, who had to come out from his goal and then scuffed a clearance out to Corey McMullan. The

prolific Comrades midfielder had no hesitation in firing the ball back towards goal with pace and accuracy from 35 yards out, leaving the 'keeper stranded as it flew into the back of the net.

The visitors continued to attack, discomforting the Institute defence on a regular basis. In the 36<sup>th</sup> minute they doubled the lead, when a ball played across to the back post area found Denver Taggart, who fired in a shot from a tight angle 5 yards out. His effort was on target and a deflection off a defender helped the ball fly past the wrong-footed 'keeper.

Comrades had been fairly solid at the back during the first half, frustrating the home side's attacking threat, but on 43 minutes they conceded a goal, which gave Institute hope. A free-kick was conceded midway inside the Comrades' half and the ball was pumped into the box, where it was knocked down to McIntyre, 5 yards out, who finished with a shot inside the far post.

The second half saw the home side emerge with a renewed vigour, but it was a mistake at the back which gifted them the equaliser on 56 minutes. A long high ball saw a mix-up between 'keeper and defence, which allowed Brown to nip in and slot the ball home from 9 yards.

The rest of the game was end to end stuff as both sides went for the winner.

In the 61<sup>st</sup> minute Comrades almost benefitted from a bizarre mistake in the home defence. A high pass back to the 'keeper from an under pressure defender bounced awkwardly and, with Gallagher unsure as to whether to catch the ball, it reared up and struck the crossbar.

As the half progressed Comrades began to regain something of the attacking threat of the first half, with Michael O'Hanlon strongly featuring down the right, where he gave the Institute defence a torrid time. The travelling supporters were incensed that defender Morrow didn't receive a second yellow card after a cynical foul on O'Hanlon midway through the half.

On 71 minutes, Comrades came close, when a corner saw Curtis Woods get his head to the ball 8 yards out, but his fine downward effort was met by a good save with his legs from Gallagher.

With time running out, Comrades were denied a winner on 86 minutes by a controversial offside decision. A good break up-field ended with Samuel McIlveen playing a superb ball over the home defence to find the run of Corey McMullan, who then produced a superb half-volleyed finish from 14 yards out. However, Comrades' joy was short-lived as the referee's assistant had raised his flag, a decision which outraged the Comrades players and vocal travelling support.